

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4689

INFO AMEMBASSY TUNIS

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT--PARA ONE)

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TAGS: AORG

SUBJ: FAO/WFP: TRIP BY U.S. REP TO FAO TO TUNISIA

1. THERE FOLLOW PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS BY U.S. REP TO U.N. FOOD AGENCIES BASED ON WHAT HE CONSIDERED HIGHLY USEFUL TRIP JUNE 11-18 TO TUNISIA TO EXAMINE FAO AND WFP WORK IN FIEDL IN CONTEXT OVERALL UN COUNTRY PROGRAM. WHILE EMBASSY TUNIS CONCURS IN SUBMISSION OF THESE OBSERVATIONS, COMMENTS BY EMBASSY WOULD BE WELCOME EITHER AT PRESENT OR SUBSEQUENTLY IN CONTEXT OF 1978 CERP0008 REPORT.

2. EMBASSY TUNIS SUPPORT FOR TRIP, DESPITE SHORT NOTICE WITH WHICH IT LAID ON WAS OUTSTANDING, STARTING WITH CORDIAL INTEREST SHOWN BY AMBASSADOR MULCAHY AND FEATURING ACTIVE AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HELPFUL INVOLVEMENT IN PLANNING AND IN SOME VISITS BY ACTING DCM MONTGOMERY AND AID MISSION DIRECTOR DAVIS. THESE ARRANGEMENTS PERMITTED TRIP TO BE FULLY SCHEDULED AND REWARDING.

3. ACTING RESEP PERRAIN WAS CANDID AND INFORMATIVE AND FAO REP BRUCHER AND WFP REP RAMADAN EXTREMELY COOPERATIVE IN FACILITATING VISITS TO PROJECTS. THERE WAS NOT TIME TO

VISIT OR GET MUCH IMPRESSION OF PROJECTS OTHER THAN THE FAO/
UNDP, FAO/SIDA AND WFP PROJECTS WHICH WERE VISITED.

4. IT IS NOTEWORTHY THAT, ALTHOUGH TUNISIA'S FIVE-YEAR INDICATIVE PLAN ANTICIPATES ROUGHLY 12 PERCENT OF AVAILABLE DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN INVESTMENT FUNDS OF \$10 BILLION AS GOING FOR INVESTMENT IN AGRICULTURE (AND PLANNING MINISTER DOUBTS THIS MUCH CAN BE ABSORBED), UN COUNTRY PROGRAM FOR SAME PERIOD AT CLEAR REQUEST OF GOT HAS 45 PERCENT OF 1977-81 LPF (\$7 MILLION OF \$15 MILLION) ALLOTTED TO FAO. WHEN ONE CONSIDERS THAT THIS HIGH PERCENTAGE OF UNDP EMPHASIS ON AGRICULTURE IS BEING SUPPLEMENTED BY A SUBSTANTIAL (BUT DECLINING) SIDA/FAO PROGRAM, A SMALL BUT RISING ARAB-FUNDED (NECP, IRAQ, QATAR) FAO TRUST FUND PROGRAM, AND THREE WFP PROJECTS RUNNING AT ANNUAL RATE OF ABOUT \$20 MILLION, RELATIVE WEIGHT OF FAO/WFP INPUTS IS NOTABLE, AND CERTAINLY MORE NOTABLE THAN REFLECTED IN UNDP 1977-81 COUNTRY PROGRAM WHICH SOMEWHAT DOWNPLAYS NON-UNDP FUNDED ACTIVITY. (IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO HAVE EMBASSY VIEW AS TO WHETHER PERCENTAGE OF ODA, AS DISTINCT FROM COMMERCIALY BIASED FOREIGN FUNDS WHICH WILL IN 1977-81 GO INTO AGRICULTURAL SECTOR, WILL BE SUBSTANTIALLY GREATER THAN FOR ANY OTHER SECTOR AND WHETHER THIS REFLECTS GOT AWARENESS THAT HUMAN NEEDS PROJECTS NOW BEST BET FOR MAINTAINING INFLOW OF ODA AT TIME WHEN TUNISIAN PER CAPITA INCOME MAY CAUSE ODA TO FALL OFF).

5. FAO REP BRUCHER MADE PERTINENT OBSERVATION THAT RESREP
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OVERALL IMPACT IS STRENGTHENED IF HIS PROGRAM HAS STRONG FOCUS IN A SINGLE SECTOR AS HE HAS BETTER ENTREE INTO HIGHER HOST GOVERNMENT PLANNING LEVELS IF UN INPUTS HAVE IMPACT IN THAT SECTOR OF SOME SIGNIFICANCE. HE ALSO INDICATED, WITHOUT NEGATIVE OVERTONES VIS-A-VIS JUST DEPARTED RESREP, THAT HE WOULD NOT WISH SERVE AGAIN IN SIMILAR CIRCUMSTANCES AS SAA/CR RATHER THAN FAO REPRESENTATIVE. UNSPOKEN IMPLICATION WAS THAT IN SUCH A SET-UP HE MANAGES BULK OF PROGRAM BUT RESREP GETS DIPLOMATIC PRECEDENCE AND ACCESS. (GOT, INCIDENTALLY, IS NOT RUSHING TO REQUEST AN FAO COUNTRY REP AS IT DOES NOT WANT TO BEAR ADDED LOCAL COSTS OF SEPARATE OFFICE; BRUCHER, HOWEVER, INDICATED THAT AN FAO COUNTRY REP IN TUNISIA WOULD BE WELL ADVISED TO STAY PHYSICALLY WITHIN RESREP'S OFFICE COMPLEX).

6. PERRAIN COMMENTED THAT GOT, LIKE MANY OTHER RECIPIENT GOVERNMENTS, REGARDS IPF AS VIRTUALLY THEIRS TO ALLOCATE. HE QUESTIONED, FOR EXAMPLE, GOT CHOICE OF VITICULTURE AS AREA FOR NEW FAO/UNDP PROJECT AND WONDERED OUT LOUD IF FAO AND RESREP SHOULD HAVE AGREED TO IT. BRUCHER LATER DEFENDED PROJECT AS PROVIDING ENTREE TO IMPORTANT NEW AREA OF TUNISIAN PRODUCTION (FAO DESK MAN FOR N. AFRICA DE FAUCONVAL, HOWEVER, PRESSED BY BAKER AFTER RETURN TO ROME TO DEFINE ITS RELATIONSHIP TO NEEDS

OF RURAL POOR, AGREED THAT THERE WERE AREAS OF FAR GREATER SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT NEEDS AND THAT THIS WAS GOOD EXAMPLE OF ACQUIESCENCE IN HOST GOVERNMENT'S PRIORITIES, REGARDLESS OF WAHT FAO'S MAY BE). THIS LATTER OBSERVATION LENT WIGHT TO STRONG RESERVATIONS PERRAIN EXPRESSED ABOUT HOST-COUNTRY EXECUTION OF PORJECTS (AS PER JIU REPORT ON EXPERTS), BASED IN LARGE PART ON HIS FEAR THAT ASSERTION OF RECIPIENT GOVERNMENT "RIGHT" TO TO DESIGNATE USE OF IPF COULD RESULT IN INITIATION OR CONTINUATION OF PROJECTS WHOSE MANAGEERS HAD POLITICAL CLOUT WITH MERITS OR EFFEICTIVE MANAGEMENT OF PROJECT A SECONDARY FACTOR.

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7. IT WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE OR FAIR TO MAKE DEFINITIVE JUDGEMENTS, IN VIEW RECENT DEPARTURE OF RESREP ABOUT EXTENT OF HIS COORDINATION OF NON-UNDP FUNDED DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY ORIGINATING BOTH INSIDE AND OUTSIDE OF UN SYSTEM. BOTH UN AND US SOURCES COMMENTED, HOWEVER, THAT GOT WARY OF ANY EFFORTS OUTSIDE OF GOT PLANNING MECHANISMS TO COORDINATE FOREIGN INPUTS. THUS, WHILE RESPRE AND HIS STAFF APPEAR TO HAVE GOOD TWO-WAY CONTACTS AND RELATIONS WITH MAJOR DONORS, AND, IN PARTICULAR WITH AMERICAN EMBASSY AND AID MISSION, THEY DO NOT HOLD GATHERINGS TO EXCHANGE INFORMATION MULTILATERALLY. THEY ADAPT TO BUT DO NOT IMPACT DIRECTLY ON GOT PLANNING, AND THEY KEEP UP WITH BUT DO NOT PROVIDE SIGNIFICANT GUIDANCE TO IBRD WORK (E.G. FIVE-MAN IRBD

MISSION IN COUNTRY DURING SAME WEEK AS BAKER TRIP-PLANNING
BRIEF-OUT WITH ACTING RESREP BEFORE DEPARTURE BUT NOT CONSULTING
MUCH IN ADVANCE OF SESSIONS WITH GOT OFFICIALS; MINISTRY OF
AGRICULTURE CONSULTS LITTLE, ACCORDING FAO REP WITH HIM
REGARDING NATURE OF PROJECTS THEY SUGGEST TO OR NEGOTIATE WITH
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OTHER DONORS). NEVERTHELESS, REREP ASSEMBLES USEFUL DOCUMEN-
TATION ON FOREIGN INPUTS ON ANNUAL BASIS AND HIS STAFF RESON-
ABLY WELL INFORMED ABOUT WHAT OTHER PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS OTHER
DONORS ARE WORKING ON. ALSO, IT WITHOUT DOUBT THAT RESULTS OF
SEVERAL FAO AND WFP PROJECTS HAVE IMPACTED ON DIRECTION AND
EMPHASIS OF AGRICULTURE MINISTRY'S THINKING AND OPERATIONS.

8. FAO FIELD PROJECTS VISITED WERE:

AGRICULRUE (OUTSIDE TUNIS)
FERRO CEMENT FISHING VESSEL (BIZERTE)
BEEF PRODUCTION (OUTSIDE TUNIS)
IRRIGATED AGRICULRE (SIDI BOUZID)
SEMI-ARID ZONES STUDIES (GABES)
PROJECT DESIGN CENTER (TUNIS)

FIRST TWO WERE SMALL, ESSENTIALLY ONE-EXPERT SHOWS OF USEFUL
PIONEERING NATURE MODERATELY WELL SUPPORTED BY GOT. REMAINING
FOUR WERE PROJECTS OF CONSIDERABLE SIGNIFICANCE IN ALL OF WHICH,
EXCEPT FOR LAST, FAO TECHNICAL ADVISORS HAD DYNAMIC, CON-
STRUCTIVE AND DOMINANT LEADERSHIP ROLES.

9. BEEF PRODUCTION AND IRRIGATION PROJECTS HAD CLEARLY
PRODUCED VISIBLE RESULTS LATTER ESPECIALLY BENEFITTING
MARGINAL SHEEPHERDERS WHO NOW ABLE BECOME SELF-SUSTAINING BEG-
ETABLE AND FRUIT GROWERS ON SMALL FARMS. BOTH ARE DEVELOPING GOOD
TUNISIAN LEADERSHIP AND PAHSING DOWN FOREING EXPERTS. SEMI-ARID ZONES
PROJECT IS ORIENTED TO RESEARCH AND MAPPING AND HAS NOW
PRODUCED PROMISING TUNISIAN INSTIUTE AT MEDENINE ON EDGE
SAHARA TO CARRY ON THIS EMPHASIS. NEED NOW IS TO FIND MEANS,
POSSIBLY THROUGH WFP, TO ENCOURAGE FORAGE PLANTING PROJECTS IN
ORDER TO CARRY OUT SOME OF RESULTS OF STUDIES. FAO DE FAUCONVAL
STATES PROJECT LEADER FOR NEXT PAHSE WILL BE DEVELOPMENT
ORINTED RATHER THAN RESEARCH ORIENTED, WITH THIS IN VIEW. SUCH
APPROACH COULD HAVE WIDER SIGNIFICANCE IN EFFORTS HALT DESER-
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TIFICATION ELSEWHERE IN AFRICA.

10. PROJECT DESIGN CENTER, IN WHICH FAO PARTICIPATION BEING
REDUCED FROM 5 TO 2 EXPERTS NOW UNDER TUNISIAN DIRECTOR WHOM

BAKER VISITED. IT IS OVERBOOKED WITH ORDERS FOR PORJECT DESIGNS AND APPEARS TO HAVE FUTURE POTENTIAL, AS IT DEVELOPS SOME EXPERIENCE TO WORK USEFULLY IN NEIGHBORING STATES IF REQUESTED. TUNISIAN DIRECTOR COMPLAINED MILDLY THAT FAO INVESTMENT CENTER (IC) SO FAR HAD NOT BEEN WILLING INCLUDE HIS PEOPLE, FOR TRAINING PURPOSE, IN IC MISSIONS.

11. IMPLEMENTATION WFP WORK APPEARS TO BE REGAINING MOMENTUM, UNDER IMPETUS OF ENERGETIC NEW WFP REP. CLOSE BACK-UP BY SUPPORTIVE FAO PROJECT 525 (NOW DOWN TO ONE FOREIGN EXPERT) HAS MADE 482 PROJECT WITH GREATEST IMPACT. DESIGN IS WELL-CONCEIVED BUT IMPLEMENTATION HAS SUFFERED (ACCORDING TO DE FAUCONVAL) BY LIMITED INFLUENCE WITHIN TUNISIAN GOVERNMENT OF TUNISIAN PROJECT DIRECTOR GJELLOULI. NOW THAT PROJECT HAS PASSED FROM FOOD RATION SUBSIDY AND LONG TERM CREDIT FOR EXTENSIVE PLANTING OF FRUIT, ALMOND AND OLIVE TREES ON SMALL FARMS TO EMPHASIS ON COMPLIMENTARY SOIL EROSION CONTROL MEASURES, THERE HAS BEEN SOME NEED TO PROD GJELLOULI (AND BAKER HEARD RAMADAN DOING THIS) TO GET NECESSARY SUPPORT OF FORESTRY DEPARTMENT TO BEGIN THESE MEASURES ON WHICH LOCAL LABOUR WILL BE PAID IN MONEY AND RATIONS. PRODDING AND PERHAPS SOME TECHNICAL ADVICE WILL BE NEEDED TO STRENGTHEN COOPERATIVES WHICH SERV AS CHANNEL FOR 482'S EFFORTS.

12. PROJECT 425 FOR BUILDING SMALL EROSION CONTROL AND EMBARKMENTS IN DESPERATELY ARID MATMATA RANGES LOOKS AS IF IT NEEDS ALL OF ATTENTION WFP CUURENTLY GIVING TO IT TO GET WORK PROJECTS GOING AND FOOD AND CASH PAYMENT DELIVERY ON TIME. CONSIDERABLE EVIDENCE POINTS TO NEGLIGENCE IN THIS REGARD BY TUNIS-BOUND FORMER WFP REP CONTRIBUTING (ALONG WITH PHYSICALLY DEMANDING NATURE OF WORK BEING PURSUED) TO SLOWDOWN OF PROJECTS.

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13. PROJECT 410 FOR SUPPLYING RATIONS TO LOW-INCOME ORIGIN STUDENTS IN AGRICULTURAL TRAINING NOT VISITED, AS IT HAS NO WORK ACTIVITY TO INSPECT. HOWEVER, BKAER GOT IMPRESSION, AS WFP REP SAW HIM OFF, THAT REP HAD RECOMMENDED AND WFP HAD ACCEPTED UTILIZATION OF COMMODITIES PLEDGED TO THIS PROJECT FOR SUPPORTING TRAINING FOR CIVIL SERVICE CONSCRIPTS. WE ARE ENCOURAGING WFP WHICH ACTUALLY HAS NOT TAKEN DECISION ON THIS YET, TO MOVE CAREFULLY AS NEW TUNISIAN CIVIL SERVICE ACT CLEARLY RESULT IN INVOLUNTARY CIVILIAN SERVICE FOR OTHERWISE UNEMPLOYED TUNISIAN MALES BETWEEN 18 AND 30. WHATEVER ITS POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL MERITS IN TUNISIAN CONTEXT, THIS PROGRAM IS NOT A REVIVED U.S.-STYLE CIVIL CONSERVATION CORPS AND DIRECT WFP LINK-UP WITH IT RAISES QUESTIONS ON WHICH WE THINK A CAREFUL RECOMMENDATION SHOULD BE MADE BY EMBASSY TUNIS. OTHERS MIGHT WELL GO BEYOND QUESTIONING U.S. PARTICIPATION IN

PROJECT WITH SUCH A LINK-UP TO OPPOSITION TO ANY WFP INVOLVEMENT. BAKER IMPRESSION, BASED ON ADMITTEDLY VER FAST RUN, IS THAT THERE ARE ENOUGH UNDEREMPLOYED, ILL-FED TUNISIAN FARMERS NOW ON LAND AND NEEDING INCOME SUPPORT TO STAY THERE TO JUSTIFY FURTHER WELL-DESIGNED WFP PROJECTS, (ESPECIALLY FIGHTING DESERTIFICATION) AND THAT THESE SHOULD TAKE PRIORITY OVER PROJECTS WHICH MIGHT ASSOCIATE WFP WITH AN INVOLUNTARY LABOR FORCE. TUNISIAN GOVERNMENT SEEMINGLY HAS ENOUGH MOTIVATION TO GET RESTIVE UNEMPLOYED YOUTH OUT OF CITY AND ONTO WORK SITES OR TRAINING TO DO SO WITHOUT DIRECT WFP SUBSIDY.

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14. IN GENERAL, IMPRESSION WAS THAT WFP WORK PROJECT 482 AND 425 WELL-DESIGNED BUT SHORTCOMINGS ON IMPLEMENTATION AND FOLLOW-UP HAD CAUSED THEM TO MOVE MORE SLOWLY AND ON SMALLER SCALE THAN ANTICIPATED. IMPORTANCE OF GETTING PROJECT METHOD WORKING ON GROUND BEFORE TURNING UP THE VOLUME THUS CLEARLY EMERGES EVEN IN THIS QUITE ADVANCED COUNTRY WITH REASONABLY EDUCATED AND NUMEROUS GOVERNMENT SERVICES.

15. WHILE THERE WAS NO POSSIBILITY IN TIME AVAILABLE TO GET INTO NON-AGRICULTURAL PROJECTS UNDER UNDP SUPERVISION, IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THESE PROJECTS RELATIVELY MODEST IN SIZE AND MODEST IN SIGNIFICANCE (EXCEPT FOR KEY ICAO PROJECT) AT

PRESENT TIME AND LIKELY TO REMAIN THAT WAY IN 1977-81 PERIOD
JUDGING BY RANGE OF SECTORS FOR PROJECT ACTIVITY IDENTIFIED
IN UNDP COUNTRY PROGRAM. THERE WILL ALSO BE A TENDENCY FOR
RESOURCES TARGETTED FOR AGRICULTURAL SECTOR TO SCATTER AS
SIDA PHASES DOWN (AND OUT IN 1981) VARIOUS ARAB DONORS ENTER
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PICTURE, EXISTING PROJECTS MOVE INTO PHASES WITH FEWER EXPERTS,
AND NEW PROJECTS, GIVEN RISING COST OF RESIDENT FOREIGN EXPERTS
AND RECRUITMENT DIFFICULTIES AT CURRENT SALARY LEVEL, TEND
TOWARD SMALLER SCALE AND SHORT-TERM CONSULTANT TYPE. RESULTANT
PICTURE WOULD SEEM TO POSE CONSIDERABLE CHALLENGE TO INCOMING
EGYPTIAN RESREP AND HIS STAFF. KEEPING UP WITH AND COORDINAT-
ING THESE NUMEROUS, SMALLER SCALE INJECTIONS OF FOREIGN
EXPERTISE ESPECIALLY THOSE WHICH ARE NOT UNDP-FUNDED, AND
MEETING EXACTING GOT RECRUITMENT REQUIREMENTS WILL BE SUFFICI-
ENTLY TIME-CONSUMING AND SCATTERED IN FOCUS TO PUT
LIMITS ON HIS ABILITY TO IMPACT ON GOT PLANNING, NOT TO SPEAK
OF OTHER DONOR INPUTS WHICH REMAIN SUBSTANTIAL, WITH NUMEROUS
FOREIGN DONORS EXCEEDING UNDP PROGRAM. TO HAVE IMPOACT, HE WILL
HAVE TO PUT MUCH OF THE PROJECT SUPPORT EFFORT ON HIS DEPUTIES
AND ON WFP AND FAO REPS AND FOCUS HIS SIGHTS ON CLOSER
COORDINATION WITH IBRD AND BETTER SPECIALIZED AGENCY LINK-UPS
TO POTENTIALLY INFLUENCE WFP PROJECTS.

16. IN AN INCREASING NUMBER OF PLACES THE TREND TO HUMAN
NEEDS IMPACT GIVENS FAO, ESPECIALLY WHEN LINKED TO WFP, LARGEST
SPECIALIZED AGENCY ROLE, ADDITIONALY TRUST FUND CARDS TO
PLAY AND IN 47 CASES, A NEWLY CREATED COUNTRY REPRESENTATIVE.
SUCH A TREND COULD WELL BE STRENGTHENED AS DONOR STATES
RECOGNIZE HIGHER LEVERAGE ON PROJECT DESIGN AND EXECUTION
AND LOWER OVERHEAD COST THEY GET IN GOING THE FAO TRUST FUND
RATHER THAN THE UNDP ROUTE. IF TUNISIAN COURSE IS ILLUSTRATIVE
OF DEGREE TO WHICH RECIPIENT GOVERNMENT CONTROL OF IPF'S
IS INCREASING UNDER NEW DIMENSIONS CONCEPT, THERE
COULD WELL BE RESULTANT TREND AMONG DONORS
TO GO THE TRUST FUND ROUTE, AS SWEDES HAVE DONE IN
TUNISIAN, IN ORDER TO NEGOTIATE SUPERIOR PROJECT DESIGN, SELECT
DESIRED AREA OF IMPACT, AND FORCE HIGHER QUALITY RECIPIENT GOVERN-
MENT PARTICIPATION AND SUPPORT. IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, RESREP
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WILL NEED TO BE PARTICULARLY SKILLFUL PERSONALLY AND IN HIS
USE OF CONTACTS WITH RESOURCE TRANSFERRING INSTRUMENTS SUCH AS
WFP, IBRD, AND PERHAPS, LATER IFAD TO REMAIN PRIMUS INTER
PARES IN IMPACTING ON RECIPIENT GOVERNMENT PLANNING AND USE OF

U.N. PROVIDED RESOURCES. IF NOT, HE WILL RISK SEEING COORDINATION WEAKEN, COORDINATED U.N. IMPACT ON PLANNING DECLINE FURTHER, AND THEREFORE MUCH OF DONOR RATIONALE FOR CHANNELLING VOLUNTARY FUNDS FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE THOROUGH UNDP ERODED.

17. FODAG HOPES FOREGOING COMMENTS, WHICH SHOULD NOT SUBSTITUTE FOR JUDGEMENTS BY EMBASSY TUNIS, WILL POINT UP AREAS FOR INVESTIGATION AND COMMENT BY EMBASSY AND AID MISSION, PARTICULARLY IN CONNECTION WITH NEXT CERP-0008 REPORT. REPORT SHOULD, IN OUR VIEW ALSO ADDRESS QUESTIONS RAISED IN A-2507 OF 6/14/77. HOWEVER, TUNIS, ALONG WITH OTHER N. AFRICAN POSTS WAS FOR SOME MYSTERIOUS REASON, NOT MADE AN ADDRESSEE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.HOLMES

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Status: NATIVE
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TAGS: AORG
To: STATE
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